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## SPECIALIZED SERVICES IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION

THERE are two ways in which we might think of this topic of specialized services in the teaching profession. One would be to canvass the different kinds of work done for the schools, to try to estimate the number of people engaged in each of these different lines of work, and to consider some of the characteristic features of each.

Another way to think of specialized service in the teaching profession is to consider ways in which the regular classroom teacher may specialize within his own position. The teacher who presides over the third and fourth grades, or the one who teaches science and mathematics in the high school may both become specialists in the particular grade level or subject they teach. And in addition each of them may render a special service by developing some professional enthusiasm.

### *Survey of Numbers in Various Types of Work<sup>1</sup>*

When we try to survey the types of work in education and the numbers of people employed, several questions are raised for which we have no answers. No one knows just how many employees work for the schools. We do know that there are over

nine hundred thousand teachers, principals, supervisors, and superintendents in the public schools and that they carry on a fascinating variety of activities. More than two-thirds of the total number are classroom teachers in the elementary schools. In that group of about six hundred and forty thousand you have more than ten thousand kindergarten teachers and about ten thousand teachers of classes for children with physical, mental, or social handicaps. Some teachers in elementary schools specialize in manual training, physical education, home economics, art, and music. In some school systems the older subjects of instruction such as reading, arithmetic, penmanship, and the social studies also are departmentalized. There is no basis for even a guess as to the number of subject specialists in the grades.

In the secondary schools there are at least two hundred and thirty thousand teachers. There is no way to divide that number exactly among the subjects in which those teachers specialize, although a rough estimate can be made, based on the National Survey of the Education of Teachers<sup>2</sup>. It seems that English is the favorite subject. If this audience were made up of a hundred representative teachers of high-school subjects there would be about twenty-two of you who teach English, thirteen who teach mathematics and thirteen who teach some one of the social studies. Those three fields of English, mathematics, and social studies would take nearly half of the audience. Foreign languages and sciences would account for twelve each and commercial work

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<sup>1</sup>Estimates given, except for subjects taught by high school teachers, are based on figures in:

National Education Association, Research Division. "Salaries in City School Systems, 1930-31." *Research Bulletin* 9: 163-226; May, 1931.

United States Dept. of the Interior, Office of Education. *Biennial Survey of Education, 1930-32*. Bulletin, 1933, No. 2. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1935. Preface, "Statistical Summary of Education, 1931-32," p. 8; Chapter I, "Statistics of State School Systems, 1931-32," p. 74.

<sup>2</sup>Evenden, Edward S.; Gamble, Guy C.; and Blue, Harold G. *Teacher Personnel in the United States*. National Survey of the Education of Teachers, Vol. II. U. S. Dept. of the Interior, Office of Education, Bulletin, 1933, No. 10. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1935. p. 241-44.



for ten. The next largest groups would be home economics, with six teachers; trades and industry with four; health and physical education with four; and two for agriculture and forestry. Art and music each would have one representative. Of course the National Survey's report included many teachers who divide their time among two or more subjects. Dr. Marjorie Rankin counted heads in fourteen city school systems and worked out figures that are not very different from those of the National Survey.<sup>3</sup> The accompanying table compares the two sets of figures.

The classroom teachers of all levels account then for nearly ninety-five per cent of the educational staff of the public elementary and secondary schools. To make up the total you have about fifty thousand others, in local school systems and state departments of education, who do little or no classroom teaching. They are the superintendents, principals, vice-principals, deans, counselors, psychologists, research workers, coordinators, visiting teachers, curriculum experts, heads of departments, supervisors, and assistant supervisors. It is through this group that some of the most interesting

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF HIGH-SCHOOL TEACHERS BY MAJOR TEACHING FIELD, IN TWO STUDIES

| Fourteen thousand teachers in fourteen cities, studied by Rankin in 1928 <sup>1</sup> |         | Sixty thousand teachers in school systems of all types, studied by National Survey of Education of Teachers in 1931 <sup>2</sup> |         |
|---|---------|--|---------|
| Teaching Field  | Percent | Teaching Field   | Percent |
| 1   | 2       | 3  | 4       |
| English   | 18.4    | English  | 21.6    |
| Mathematics   | 10.7    | Mathematics  | 13.0    |
| Social studies  | 12.2    | History, sociology, economics  | 12.8    |
| Foreign languages   |         | Foreign languages  |         |
| Latin   | 2.7     | Classical languages  | 5.7     |
| Modern languages  | 7.0     | Modern languages   | 6.2     |
| Total   | 9.7     | Total  | 11.9    |
| Science   | 7.9     | Science  |         |
| Commercial work   | 9.6     | Biological sciences  | 5.2     |
| Home economics  | 5.4     | Physical sciences  | 6.5     |
| Trades  | 7.8     | Total  | 11.7    |
| Physical education and hygiene  | 7.3     | Business and commerce  | 9.7     |
| Music   | 3.1     | Home economics   | 5.9     |
| Art   | 4.9     | Trades and industry  | 4.2     |
| All others  | 3.0     | Health and physical education  | 3.9     |
| Total   | 100.0   | Agriculture and forestry   | 2.0     |
|   |         | Music  | 1.6     |
|   |         | Art  | 1.4     |
|   |         | Education  | .3      |
|   |         | Total  | 100.0   |

<sup>1</sup>Rankin, Marjorie. *Trends in Educational Occupations*. Contributions to Education, No. 412. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1930. p. 25, 39.

<sup>2</sup>Evenden, Edward S.; Gamble, Guy C.; and Blue, Harold G. *Teacher Personnel in the United States*. National Survey of the Education of Teachers, Vol. II. U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Bulletin, 1933, No. 10. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1935. p. 241-44.

<sup>3</sup>Rankin, Marjorie. *Trends in Educational Occupations*. Contributions to Education, No. 412. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1930. p. 25, 39.

experiments and innovations in school practice are being developed.

Beyond all of these workers I have mentioned, who are definitely a part of the



teaching profession itself, there are members of other professions and specialized occupations who serve the schools. Among them are the school architects, accountants, engineers, doctors, dentists, nurses, and librarians. We have no estimates as to how many of these employees there are, but the number must be considerable.

*Specialization Within the Regular Professional Assignment*

It is in the great city school systems that this bewildering array of specialists is most likely to be found. In a state such as ours, where there are few large cities, we naturally find less division of responsibility. In the small school system there are the teachers, the principals, two or three supervisors, and the superintendent. This group has to do all of the professional work which is provided. It is that situation which suggests the other type of specialized service which was mentioned earlier, the professional sideline.

In one small high school in the Middle West, one of the five teachers was a young man who was interested in the individual problems of his students. He found himself becoming an unofficial counsellor and vocational guidance worker. It was such a satisfying experience to help boys and girls in this way that he gave hours of his own free time to this service. The principal was wise enough to recognize the opportunity for his school to have a much-needed professional service that many city schools are still developing only slowly. The principal encouraged the teacher to take a summer course in counseling and guidance. The next year the teacher's program was arranged so that he could devote a small part of the regular school day to this work. There was no extra salary available, only the professional recognition by the school itself of the unique service which one member of the faculty was prepared to give.

In your own experience you have known of many such examples of the teacher who

carries a "spare tire" in the form of some special qualification. There was the science teacher whose orderly mind could not endure the confusion of the neglected school library. In trying to get the books in usable condition she became interested enough to devote some time to the study of library practice and to get the library on a working basis for the first time.

There was the teacher of the fourth grade who made a hobby of geography pictures. She collected such a file of fascinating pictures of places and people that other teachers began to contribute items as well as to borrow for their own classes. Before long the picture collection was a cooperative enterprise in which the whole school shared.

There is the teacher who enjoys writing. For example, any of you who have used the lesson unit series edited by William McCall must acknowledge the professional service rendered by the teachers who wrote up those 148 teaching experiments in such detail that other teachers could study them.

Then there are teachers who get infinite satisfaction from some little private specialization that affects only her pupils and herself. I know one teacher who specializes in unlovable children. Not just the bad ones—they are often the most lovable—but the sullen, ugly, whining, stupid, and queer ones. It is her idea that if she visits their homes, and finds out something about these ugly ducklings, there may be something she can do to help them develop happier personalities. It is a discouraging process, because so often the cause seems to be poverty, or an unhappy home, or a doting parent, or a physical handicap that cannot be corrected. But there have been enough apparent successes to keep her at it. In studying those children and in reading books and articles on individual pupil adjustment she has developed into a practical psychologist with a richer understanding of all her pupils.

By emphasizing these supplementary services one should not give less recognition



to one teaching type who is likely to be overlooked in this day of innovation and publicity. No one contributes more than the teacher who is a scholar, the person who is so in love with his subject—English, typewriting, art, or any other—that he continues to explore it, to keep abreast with recent findings, and to be ever studying new ways to share it most persuasively with his pupils. The subject-matter enthusiast does of course face a real danger of becoming one-sided, and perhaps should select whatever special service he renders with an eye to rounding out his professional interests.

It takes time and energy to render these special services. It seems that the teachers most likely to do these extra jobs are not the ones who slight their main teaching responsibility. It is more likely to be the teacher who has first accepted his original assignment as a professional challenge, and has mastered the routine, worked out short cuts, and learned the art of doing the day's work with skill and ease instead of with labored effort. To handle well any regular teaching assignment for five days every week is in itself a professional achievement of real distinction. It would seem that for the first few years of teaching no side-show could be so exciting as the main tent itself, which is the acquiring of skill in the art of teaching. Until the teacher is sure of his strength in classroom management, in the leading of discussion, and the planning of work, no other form of specialization is so stimulating. The best teacher probably continues almost indefinitely to improve in this basic skill. But after the novice stage is past there is time and enthusiasm for going the second mile in professional service.

The examples of specialized service already mentioned are for the most part examples of individual work—counseling, librarianship, collecting visual aids, writing, studying individual pupils, personal scholarship. There are also many group activities through which the teacher may serve the profession and the whole cause of educa-

tion. Teachers who work on committees for selecting textbooks, revising curriculum units, revising pupil record and report systems, and supervising extra-curriculum activities—to mention a few examples—are rendering a necessary and valuable service. Not every teacher is able to work effectively as a member of a committee. When such an ability has been acquired, the teacher has a real professional contribution to make.

### *Service Through Professional Organizations*

One form of group service which deserves attention is that of taking part as an active member of professional organizations. The teacher as a citizen has an individual responsibility to vote and to take an interest in public affairs, in general. But when policies affecting the schools are being debated the individual teacher who takes sides finds it hard to escape the charge, however unjust, of considering only his own personal interest. When school issues are at stake the teacher can exert his influence most effectively through the impersonal voice of the teachers' professional organization.

Every teacher may be a member of the state education association and the National Education Association. In most communities there is also a local teachers' association which is affiliated with the state and national organizations. A recent study of salary schedules shows that in a surprisingly large number of school systems the local teachers' club has been asked by the school authorities to take a part in drafting the teachers' salary schedule. Those of you who are familiar with the reports of the Department of Classroom Teachers of the National Education Association will have in mind many activities which local groups have sponsored. Professional magazines, lecture courses, study groups, social gatherings, credit unions, group insurance, and the promotion of legislation are typical projects.

It is hard to overestimate the public serv-



ice which teachers have rendered through their state associations. In state after state the forward steps in school legislation for school financing, teacher certification standards, compulsory education, school textbooks, and other significant measures have been started or vigorously supported by the state teachers association. This college has a special pride in the Virginia Education Association in the fact that its own Dr. Heatwole has been the executive officer of the Association during its recent years. The Virginia Association is outstanding in the splendid *Virginia Journal of Education* which it publishes, the substantial headquarters building which it maintains in Richmond, the preventorium for teachers at Blue Ridge, its enthusiastic annual convention, and its distinguished record of leadership in promoting progressive school legislation. Every Virginia teacher may be proud of the privilege of membership.

The National Education Association has been for more than seventy-five years the national professional organization for teachers in the United States. It has served the schools well. The Association and its twenty-four departments cover nearly the whole range of professional interest in education. The Association of Teachers Colleges, which is a Department of the National Education Association, has taken the lead in the reorganization of the last twenty years in the education of teachers. Three major fields of service by the National Education Association have been to raise standards in the teaching profession, to improve the service rendered by the schools, and to interpret the schools to the public. The Association renders individual service to every one of its more than 180,000 members by the monthly *Journal*, which brings to them a thoughtfully selected body of professional reading. The teachers of this country have every right to be proud of the professional service which they render through membership in their national organization.

### Summary

Two kinds of specialized service have been discussed. First was the broad specialization which determines the position one holds in the school system. The second type of service considered was the professional avocation or side-line. Illustrations were drawn from school systems where staffs are limited and the opportunity great for rendering a real service by developing an extra ability. Membership in educational organizations, local, state, and national, gives the teacher a chance to render public service beyond the scope of his own individual efforts, and to work for the schools in the state and in the nation.

Whatever our field of special service may be, we can count it an honor to be a member of the teaching profession. I know of no better field in which to win "some victory for humanity."

HAZEL DAVIS

### OUR YESTERDAYS: IN TWO REELS

THREE years ago, when celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of this school, alumnae and faculty-members gave a rich feast of personal reminiscences of those opening days back in 1909-10. Now we come to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first graduation, and I too am thinking back to those beginning days. If I repeat things which have been said before on this rostrum, "I cry you mercy."

Much has been said of how, during those early years, "the Harrisonburg girl of twenty-five years hence" was held constantly in mind by all those who were contributing to the founding of this school. Why, the spirit of that young lady fairly hounded everybody around here! Some of you remember that the first *Schoolma'am*, that of 1910, contained a direful threat that the Shades of the Original Students might at